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MR. BULWER
ON
THE PRESENT CRISIS.

EIGHTH EDITION.

WITH
LORD BROUGHAM'S LETTER.

A LETTER

TO

A LATE CABINET MINISTER

OF THE

PRESENT CRISIS

BY

EDWARD LYTTON BULWER, ESQ. M.P.

AUTHOR OF "PENNY AND THE ENGLISH," &c.

TO WHICH IS ADDED,

A LETTER FROM LORD BROUGHAM,

TO MR. BULWER.

"But, my lords, how is the King's Government to be carried on?"—*the*
Days of Washington on the 15th of 1834.

"The general appearance of submission, which was liberal enough, he
to remove from office the Ministers of the King, with whose liberal opinions he
had recently, as well as early, been distinguished. As the King found that his
Minister would not comply with his projects, he determined to dismiss him before
the meeting of Parliament."—*Illustrations of the History of the Revolution, 1834.*

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"But, my Lords, how is the King's Government to be carried on?"—*The Duke of Wellington on the Reform Bill.*

"The general appearance of submission. . . . encouraged the King to remove from office the Marquis of Halifax, with whose liberal opinions he had recently, as well as early, been dissatisfied. As the King found that Halifax would not comply with his projects, he determined to dismiss him before the meeting of Parliament."—*Mackintosh's History of the Revolution. Chap. 2.*

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A LETTER

TO A LATE GABINET MINISTER

MY LORD,

The Duke of Wellington has obtained many victories but he never yet has obtained a victory over the English People.—That battle is not to be adventured, it has been tried before but in vain. On the worse ground the French Captain hazards it again, for his first battle was to prevent giving power to the people; the power obtained, the second is to retain it. It is the usual fate of fortunate warriors that their old age is the asphixia of their renown. No man has read the history of England without compassion for the hero of Anne's time. That though in his glory, and Marlborough in his flower: what a scene in the contrast! With a genius for war in his youth, with a genius

LONDON:

JOHNSON AND PALMER, PRINTERS, SAVOY STREET, STRAND.

A LETTER

TO A LATE CABINET MINISTER.

MY LORD ;

The Duke of Wellington has obtained many victories, but he never yet has obtained a victory over the English People !—That battle is now to be adventured ; it has been tried before, but in vain. On far worse ground the great Captain hazards it again ; for his first battle was to *prevent* giving power to the people ; the power obtained, his second is to *resist* it. It is the usual fate of fortunate warriors, that their old age is the sepulchre of their renown. No man has read the history of England without compassion for the hero of Anne's time. Marlborough in his glory, and Marlborough in his dotage ; what a satire in the contrast ! With a genius for war, it may be, equal ; with a genius in peace, incontestably inferior ; with talents

far less various ; with a knowledge of his times far less profound ; with his cunning and his boldness, without his eloquence and his skill, the Duke of Wellington has equalled the glory of Marlborough,—is he about to surpass his doctage ? Marlborough was a trickster, but he sought only to trick a court ; has the Duke of Wellington a grander ambition, and would he trick a people ? “ Like chimnies,” said the wise man, “ which are useful in winter and useless in summer, soldiers are great in war, and valueless in peace.” The chimney smokes again !—there is a shout from the philosophers who disagree with the wise man, “ See how useful it is !”—but it smokes because it has kept the soot of the last century, and has just set the house in a blaze !—the smoke of the chimney, in this instance, is only the first sign of the conflagration of the edifice.

Let us, my Lord, examine the present state of affairs. Your Lordship is one of that portion of the late Ministry which has been considered most liberal. Acute, far-seeing, and accomplished, with abilities, which, exercised in a difficult position,

have been singularly successful in the results they achieved, your Lordship is among those whose elevation to the Cabinet was hailed with a wider satisfaction than that of a party—and so short a time has elapsed between your accession and retirement, (expulsion would be the proper term,) that you are but little implicated in the faults or virtues of the administration, over whose grave I shall endeavour, in the course of this letter, to inscribe a just and impartial epitaph. I address to you, my Lord, these observations, as one interested alike in the preservation of order, and the establishment of a popular government—there may be a few who wish to purchase the one at the expense of the other; you wish to unite them, and so do I. And we are both confident that such is yet the wish,—nay more—the assured *hope*, of the majority of the English people.

The King has dissolved Lord Melbourne's Administration, and the Duke of Wellington is at the head of affairs. Who will be his colleagues is a question that admits of no speculation. We are as certain of the list as if it were already in the Gazette. It is amusing to

see the now ministerial journals giving out, that we are not on any account to suppose, that it must necessarily be a high Conservative cabinet. God forbid so rash a conjecture! "Who knows," say they, "but what many Whigs—many Liberals, will be a part of it! We are only waiting for Sir Robert Peel, in order to show you, perhaps, that the government will—*not* be Tory!"* So then, after all the Tory abuse of the Whigs—after all the assertions of their unpopularity, it is nevertheless convenient to insinuate that some of these most abominable men may yet chequer and relieve the too expectant and idolatrous adoration with which the people would be embued for a cabinet purely Conservative! The several ambrosias of Wellington and Londonderry, of Herries and Peel, would be too strong for mortal tastes, if blended into one divine combination—so they might as well pop a Whig or two into the composition, just to make it fit for mankind! The hypothesis may be con-

* "It is possible his Grace may think that some of the Whig leaders who are abroad, or absent from London, are likely to form useful components of a new administration."—*Standard*.

venient—but, unhappily, no one accepts it. Every man in the political world who sees an inch before his nose, is aware, that though his Grace may have an option with respect to measures, he has none with respect to men. He may filch away the Whig policy, but he cannot steal the Whigs themselves without their consent. And the fact is notorious, that there is not a single man of liberal politics—a single man, who either belonged to the late government, or has supported popular measures, who will take office under the Duke of Wellington, charm he never so wisely. It is said, my Lord, by those who ought best to know, that even Lord Stanley, of whom, by the unthinking, a momentary doubt was entertained, scorns the very notion of a coalition with the Conservatives—a report I credit at once, because it is congenial to the unblemished integrity and haughty honour of the man. The Duke of Wellington, then, has no option as to the party he must co-invest with office—unless, indeed, he strip himself of all power—abdicate the post of *chef*, and send up to his Majesty the very same bill of fare

which has just been found so unpalatable to the royal tastes. This is not exactly probable. And we know, therefore, even before Sir Robert Peel arrives, and whether Sir Robert Peel take office or whether he do not,—we know that his Grace's colleagues, or his Grace's nominees, can only be the dittos of himself—it is the Farce of Anti-Reform once more, by Mr. Sarum and his family—it is the old company again, and with the old motto “ Vivant Rex et Regina ! ” Now-a-days, even in farces, the loyalty of the play bill does not suffice to carry the public. Thank God ! for the honour of political virtue, it *is*, and *can* be, no compromise of opinions !—no intermixture of Whigs and Tories !—not a single name to which the heart of the people ever for a moment responded will be found to relieve the well-known list of downright, thorough, uncompromising enemies to all which concedes abuse to the demands of opinion. Your Lordship remembers in Virgil how Æneas meets suddenly with the souls of those who were to return to the earth they had before visited, after drinking deep enough of oblivion ; so now how eager

—how noisy—how anxious wait the Conservative shadows, for the happy hour that is to unite them to the substance of place.

—*Strepit omnis murmure campus!*

how they must fret and chafe for the appointed time!—but in the meanwhile have *they drunk of the Lethe*? If *they* have, unhappily the world to which they return has not had a similar advantage; they are escaped from their purgatory before the appointed time—for the date which Virgil, and we, gave them, in order completely to cleanse their past misdeeds, was—a thousand years! In the meanwhile there they stand! mistaken, unequivocal!—Happy rogues—behold them, in the elysium of their hopes, perched upon little red boxes, tied together by little red strings—

“ Iterumque in tarda reverti

Corpora; quæ lucis miseris tam dira cupido?”

Well may the Times and the Tories say they will be “an united Cabinet:”—united they always were in their own good days of the Liver-

pool ascendancy—united to take office at every risk—to seize all they can get—to give nothing that they can refuse!—My God! what delight among the subordinate scramblers to see before them once more the prospect of a quarter's salary!—They have been out of service a long time—their pride is down—they are willing to be hired by the job;—a job too of the nature of their old services; for, without being a prophet, one may venture to predict that they will have little enough to do for their money! When working-day commences with the next session of Parliament they will receive their wages and their discharge. They have gone into sinecures again! honest fellows! they are making quick use of the Poor Law bill—in which it is ordained that able-bodied paupers out of employ should be taken *in doors for relief*! And yet I confess, there is something melancholy as well as ludicrous, in the avidity of these desperadoes.—The great Florentine historian informs us, with solemn indignation, (as something till then unheard of in the corruption of human nature,) that in the time of the plague there were certain men who rejoiced, for it was

an excellent time for pillage !—the people perished, but the brigands throve !—And nothing, we might imagine at first, could exceed the baseness of those who sought to enrich themselves amidst the general affliction. But on consideration, we must deem those men still baser who do not find—but who create—the disorder ;—and who not only profit by the danger of the public—but in order to obtain the profit, produce the danger !—For, my Lord, there are two propositions which I hold to be incontestable :—first, that the late resolution of the King, if sudden in effect, was the result of a previous and secret understanding that the Tories would accept office ; and that his Majesty never came to the determination of dismissing my Lord Melbourne, until he had ascertained, mediately or immediately—(it matters not which, nor how long ago)—that the Duke of Wellington was not only prepared to advise the King as to his successor, but could actually pledge himself to form a Ministry. I grant that this is denied, though feebly, by the Conservative journals, but to what an alternative would belief in that denial reduce us ! Can we

deem so meanly of the royal prudence, as to imagine that the King *could* dismiss one Government, without being assured that he could form another? In what an awful situation would this empire be placed, could we attribute to his Majesty, with the Tory tellers of the tale, so utter a want of the commonest resources of discretion,—so reckless and improvident a lunacy!

But it may be granted, perhaps, that the King was aware that the Duke of Wellington *would* either undertake to form a Cabinet, or to advise his Majesty as to its formation, whenever it should please the King to exercise his undoubted prerogative in the dismissal of Lord Melbourne, and yet be asserted that neither that understanding nor that dismissal was the result of intrigue. Doubtless! Who knows so little of a Court as to suppose that an intrigue is ever carried on within its precincts? Is not that the place, above all others, where the secret whisper, the tranquil hint, the words that never commit the speaker, the invisible writing and automaton talking of diplomacy, are never known! It is never in a Court that an intrigue is formed;

and the reason is obvious—because they have always another name for it! There was no intrigue then. Why should there be one? The King might never have spoken to the Duke of Wellington on the subject—the Duke of Wellington might be perfectly unaware of what time or on what pretext Lord Melbourne would be dismissed; and yet the King might, and must, (for who can say a King has not common sense?) have known that the Duke would accept office whenever Lord Melbourne was dismissed; and the Duke have known, on his part, that the King was aware of that loyal determination. This is so plain a view of the case, that it requires no state explanations to convince us of it, or persuade us out of it.

The Duke, then, and his colleagues were willing to accept office: on the knowledge of that willingness the King exercised his prerogative, and since we now see no other adviser of the Crown, it is his Grace alone whom we must consider responsible for the coming experiment, which is to back the House of Lords against the Representatives of the People.

I hold it as a second and incontestable proposition, that in this experiment there is danger, were it only for Ireland—the struggle has begun—the people have not been the first to commence—they will be the last to leave it. It is a struggle between the Court and the People. My Lord, recollect that fearful passage, half tragedy, half burlesque, in the history of France, which we now see renewed in England—when Mirabeau rose up in the midst of an assembly suddenly dissolved, and the nation beheld the *tiers état* on one side, and the Master of the Ceremonies on the other!

The Duke of Wellington is guiltless of the lore of history, not so his colleagues. I will concede the whole question of danger in the struggle about to be—I will subscribe to the wisdom of the experiment—I will renounce liberty itself—if Sir Robert Peel, so accomplished in letters—if Sir George Murray, so erudite in history, will but tell us of a single instance in which the people, having firmly obtained the ascendant power,—having held that power for two years, have, at the end of that pe-

riod, spontaneously resigned it. The English people have the power now, in their elections—an election is at hand—there is no army to awe, no despot to subdue, no enemy to embarrass them—will they, of their own accord, give back that power to the very men from whom they have wrenched it? The notion is so preposterous that we can scarcely imagine the design of the new Cabinet to rest with the experiment of a new Parliament: it would seem as if they meditated the alternative of governing without a Parliament at all—as if they would hazard again the attempt of the Stuarts; as if the victor of Waterloo were already looking less to the conduct of the electors than to the loyalty of the army. In fact, this is not so wholly extravagant an expectation as it may seem. The Tories fear the people—why should the people not fear the Tories? They call us desirous of a revolution—why may we not think they would crush that revolution in the bud, by a despotism? Nor, for politicians without principle, would the attempt be so ridiculous as our pride might suppose. It seems to me, if they *are* resolved to govern us,

that the sword would be the best sceptre. A resolute army, well disciplined, and well officered, with the Duke of Wellington at the head, would be a far more formidable enemy to the people than half a score hack officials in the council, and a legion of smooth-faced Conservatives, haranguing, bribing, promising,—abusing known reformers, and promising unknown reforms, to the “ten-pound philosophers” from the hustings : the latter experiment is ridiculous, the former is more grave and statesmanlike. If a Londonderry would have advised his Majesty to call in the Duke of Wellington, a Machiavelli would have told him in doing so to calculate on the army. Folly in these days, as in all others, can only be supported and rendered venerable by force.

As yet we are lost in astonishment at the late changes : we are not angry, we are too much amused, and too confident of our own strength to be angry. So groundless seems the change, that people imagine it only to be fathomed by the most recondite conjectures. They are lost in a wilderness of surmise, and yet, I fancy, that the mystery is not difficult to solve.

Let us for a moment leave Lord Althorp out of the question ; we will come to him by-and-by. Let us consider the question of reforming the Irish Church. England has two prominent causes of trouble : the one is the state of Ireland, the other is her House of Lords. Now it is notorious that we cannot govern Ireland without a very efficient and thorough reform in the mighty grievance of her church ; it is equally notorious that that reform the House of Lords would reject. We foresaw this—we all knew that in six months the collision between the two Houses would come—we all knew that the Lords would reject that reform, and we all felt assured that Lord Melbourne would tell the King that he was not fit to be a minister if he could *not carry it*. There is the collision ! in that collision, which would have yielded ? Not the House of Commons. All politicians, even the least prophetic, must have foreseen this probability, this certainty. His Majesty (let us use our common sense) *must* have foreseen it too. Doubtless, his Majesty foresaw also that this was not the sole question of dispute, which his present adminis-

tration, and his present House of Commons would have been compelled by public opinion to raise with the Hereditary Chamber, and his Majesty therefore resolved to take the earliest decorous opportunity of preventing the collision, not by gaining the Lords, but by dismissing the Commons, and he now hopes, *by the assistance of the leader of the House of Lords*, to make the attempt to govern his faithful subjects, not by the voice of that chamber they have chosen for themselves, but by that very assembly who were formerly in the habit of choosing for them. It is an attempt to solve our most difficult problem, an attempt to bring the two Houses into harmony with each other ; but it is on an unexpected principle.—There is an anecdote of Sheridan, that walking home one night, not altogether so sober as he should be, he was suddenly accosted by a gentleman in the gutter, considerably more drunk than himself. “For the love of God, help me up!” cried the stranger. “My dear Sir,” hiccuped Sheridan, “*that* is out of the question. I cannot help you up ; but (let us compromise the matter) *I will lie down by you !*” —The House

of Lords is in the gutter—the House of Commons on its legs—the matter is to be compromised—the House of Commons is not to help up the House of Lords, but to lie down by its side! Fate takes from us the leader of the Liberals in one House;—to supply the place, his Majesty gives us the leader of the Tories in the other. Prophetic exchange! We are not to make our Lords reformers, but our representatives cease to be so! Such is the royal experiment to prevent a collision. It is a very ingenious one; but His Majesty has forgotten that Gatton and Lostwithiel are no more. In the next election this question is to be tried, “ARE THE PEOPLE OF ENGLAND TO BE GOVERNED ACCORDING TO THE OPINION OF THE HOUSE OF LORDS, OR ACCORDING TO THE PRINCIPLES OF THEIR OWN REFORM! That is the point at issue. Twist, pervert, construe it as you will—raise whatever cries in favour of the Church on one hand, or in abuse of the Whigs on the other, the question for the electors is;—will they, or will they not, choose a House of Commons that shall pass the same votes as the Lords, and that shall not pass votes

which the Lords would reject? After having abolished the Gattons, will they make their whole House a Gatton?

Supposing then the King, from such evident reasons, to have resolved to get rid of his Ministers, at the first opportunity,*—suddenly Lord Spencer dies, and the opportunity is afforded. There might have been a better one. Throughout the whole history of England, since the principles of a constitutional government, and of a responsible administration, were established, in 1688, there is no parallel to the combination

* And the Standard (Nov. 20th,) the now official organ, (and certainly an abler or a more eloquent the ministers could not have) frankly allows that the King has long been dissatisfied with the government—and even suggests the causes of that displeasure.

“Lord Grey’s administration,” it says, “was at first perfect—(indeed! that is the first time we have heard the concession from such a quarter)—or if altered, altered only for the better by its purification from the *to-all-intolerable!* Earl of Durham.” But this halcyon state soon ceases, because liberal measures creep in, and chief among the causes of the King’s dislike to his ministers, and therefore to the Commons, is, first, the Irish Church Bill, which the reader will remember was rejected by the House of Lords—the *bill*, not the *rejection of it*; is mightily displeasing to the King; and secondly, that change in the Irish Coercion Bill which allowed his Majesty’s Irish subjects a Jury instead of a Court-Martial. This is termed by the Standard—“the Coercion Bill mangled into a mere mockery.”—We may see what sort of mangling we are likely to have.

of circumstances attendant upon the present change. A parallel to a part of the case there may be, to the whole case there is none. The Cabinet assure the King of their power and willingness to carry on the government; the House of Commons, but recently elected, supports that Cabinet by the most decided majorities; the Premier, not forced on the King by a party, but *solicited by himself* to accept office; a time of profound repose; no resignation tendered, no defeat incurred—the revenue increasing—quiet at home—peace abroad; the political atmosphere perfectly serene:—when lo, there dies a very old man, whose death every one has been long foreseeing—not a minister, but the father of a minister, which removes, not the Premier, but the Chancellor of the Exchequer, from the House of Commons to the House of Lords! An event so long anticipated, does not confound the Cabinet. The premier is not aghast, he cannot be taken by surprise by an event so natural, and so anticipated, (for very old men *will* die!) he is provided with names to fill up the vacant posts of Chancellor of the

Exchequer, and Leader of the House of Commons. He both feels and declares himself equally strong as ever ; he submits his new appointments to his Majesty. Let me imagine the reply. The King, we are informed, by the now ministerial organs, expresses the utmost satisfaction at Lord Melbourne and his Government ; he considers him the most honourable of men, and among the wisest of statesmen. Addressing him, then, after this fashion—

“ He does not affect to dissemble his love,
And *therefore* he kicks him down stairs.”

“ My Lord :—you are an excellent man, very—but old Lord Spencer—he was a man seventy-six years old ; no one could suppose that at that age, an Earl would die ! You are an admirable minister, I am pleased with your measures ; but old Lord Spencer is no more. It is a sudden, an unforeseen event. Who could imagine he would only live to seventy-six ? The revenue is prospering, the Cabinet is strong—our allies are faithful, you have the House of Commons at your back ; but alas ! Lord Spen-

cer is dead ! You cannot doubt my attachment to Reform, but of course it depended on the life of Lord Spencer. You have lost a Chancellor of the Exchequer ; you say, you can supply his place ;—but who can supply the place of the late Lord Spencer ? You have lost a leader of the House of Commons ; you have found another on whom you can depend ; but, my Lord, where shall we find another Earl Spencer, so aged, and so important as the Earl who is gone ! The life of the government, you are perfectly aware, was an annuity on the life of this unfortunate nobleman—he was only seventy-six ! my love of liberal men, and liberal measures, is exceeding, and it was bound by the strongest tie, —the life of the late Lord Spencer. How can my people want Reform, now Lord Spencer is dead ? How can I support reforming ministers, when Lord Spencer has ceased to be ? The Duke of Wellington, you must be perfectly aware, is the only man to govern the country, which has just lost the owner of so fine a library, and so large an estate. It is true, that his Grace could not govern it before, but then Lord Spencer was in

the way ! The untimely decease of that nobleman has altered the whole face of affairs. The people were not quite contented with the Whigs, because they did not go far enough; but then — Lord Spencer was alive ! The people now will be satisfied with the Tories, because they do not go so far, for — Lord Spencer is dead ! A Tory ministry is necessary, it cannot get on without a Tory parliament; and a Tory parliament cannot be chosen without a Tory people. But, ministry, parliament, and people, what can they be but Tory, after so awful a dispensation of Providence as the death of the Earl of Spencer ? My Lord, excuse my tears, and do me the favour to take this letter to the Duke of Wellington.”

Well, but it may be said, that it was not the death of this good old man, that so affected the King's arrangements ; it was the removal of Lord Althorp from the Commons. “What, is not that cause enough ?” cry the Tories; About as much cause as the one just assigned. “What, did not Lord Melbourne himself say, at the retirement of Lord Grey, that the return

of Lord Althorp was indispensably necessary to his taking office?" Very possibly. But there is this little difference between the two cases; in the one, Lord Melbourne said, he could not carry on the government without Lord Althorp as leader of the Commons; and in the other, he assured the King, that he *could*. The *circumstances* at the time which broke up Lord Grey's government, were such as raised the usual importance of Lord Althorp to a degree which every one saw must subside with the circumstances themselves. In the first place, it was understood, that Lord Althorp left the government, rather than pass an unpopular clause in the Coercion Bill, the passing of which certain circumstances rendered doubly distasteful to his mind; that this led to the resignation of Earl Grey, and that Lord Althorp felt a natural and generous scruple in resuming office after that resignation. The Members of the House of Commons came to their memorable requisition, because they looked upon Lord Althorp's resignation, as the consequence of

his popular sentiments. They feared the vacancy he created could be filled only by a man of less liberal opinions, and they felt his return, in such circumstances, would be for the popular triumph, as his secession might be but a signal for a change of policy. Such were the circumstances under which Lord Melbourne, at *that time*, considered Lord Althorp's return to the leadership of the Commons as necessary to the stability of the government. But what circumstances in the late changes are analogous to these? Is Lord Althorp now removed from office by popular sentiments, rendering his return necessary for the triumph of his sentiments—not the use of his talents? Is the Cabinet broken up? Is the House of Commons declaring, that not even death shall tear it from its beloved leader? What absurdity, to follow out the parallel! Lord Althorp was called by the death of his venerable father to the House of Lords. His loss created no alarm for an alteration in our policy, broke up no cabinet, and disturbed no measures; the prime minister was perfectly re-

signed to the event, and perfectly prepared with his successor—a successor of the same principles, and if of less conciliatory manners, of equal experience, more comprehensive knowledge, and greater eloquence.* The King has a right to exercise his prerogative—no one disputes it. It is only a misfortune that other ministers have not also fathers of seventy-six! Old Sir Robert, good Lord Mornington—would that *they* were alive!

And having now to all plain men shown how utterly burlesque is the whole pretext of the dismissal, and the whole parallel between Lord Althorp's former retirement and present elevation, let us turn again from the reason of the change to the change itself.

There are some persons simple enough to imagine that though the Tory government may imply Tory men it does not imply Tory measures; that the Duke of Wellington, having changed his

* In the best informed political circles it is understood that Lord John Russell would have led the House of Commons and had the conduct of the Irish Church Bill. Mr. Abercromby would have taken charge of the Municipal Reform. Names that on these questions in particular would have shown that the government were in earnest in their measures.

sentiments (no, not his sentiments,—his actions)—on the Catholic question, will change them again upon matters like—the reform of the Protestant Church, the abuses of corporations, perhaps even triennial parliaments, and the purgation of the pension list! There are men, calling themselves reformers, and blaming the Whigs as too moderate in reforms, not only vain enough to hope this, but candid enough to say that a government thus changing—no matter with what open and shameless profligacy—no matter with what insatiate lust of power, purchased by what unparalleled apostacy—that a government, thus changing, and therefore thus unprincipled, ought to receive the support of the people! They would give their suffrage to the Duke of Wellington upon the very plea, that he will desert his opinions; and declare that they will support him as a minister, if they can but be permitted to loathe him as an apostate.

My lord, I think differently on this point. Even were I able to persuade myself that the new Tory government would rival or outbid the Whigs in popular measures, I would not sup-

port it. I might vote for their measures, but I would still attempt to remove the men. What! is there nothing at which an honest and a generous people should revolt, in the spectacle of ministers suddenly turned traitors by the bribe of office—in the juggling by which men, opposing all measures of reform when out of place, will, the very next month, carry those measures if place depends upon it? Would there be no evil in this to the morality of the people? Would there be no poison in this to the stream of public opinion? Would it be no national misfortune—no shock to order itself, (so much of which depends on confidence in its administrators,) to witness what sickening tergiversation, what indelible infamy, the vilest motives of place and power could inflict on the characters of public men? And to see the still more lamentable spectacle of a Parliament and a Press vindicating the infamy, and applauding the tergiversator! Vain, for these new-light converts, would be the cant excuses of ‘practical statesmen attending to the spirit of the age’—‘conforming to the wants of the time’—‘yielding their

theories to the power of the people ;’ *for these are the very excuses of which they have denied the validity !* If this argument be good for them in office, why did they deny, and scorn, and trample upon it out of office ? far more strong and cogent was it when they had only to withdraw opposition to measures their theories disapproved, than when they themselves are spontaneously to frame those measures, administer them, and carry through. There could be but one interpretation to their change — one argument in their defence, and that is, — that they would not yield to reforms when nothing was to be got by it ; but that they would enforce reforms when they were paid for it — that they would not part with the birthright without the pottage, nor play the Judas without the fee ! I do not think so meanly of the high heart of England as to suppose that it would approve, even of good measures, from motives so shamelessly corrupt. And, for my own part, solemnly as I consider a thorough redress of her “ monster grievance ” necessary for the peace of Ireland, a reform of our own Church, and our own Corporations, and

a thorough carrying out and consummation of the principles of our reform, desirable for the security and prosperity of England, I should consider these blessings purchased at too extravagant a rate, if the price were the degradation of public men—and the undying contempt for consistency, faith, and honour—for all that makes power sacred, and dignity of moral weight—which such an apostacy would evince. Never was liberty permanently served by the sacrifice of honesty.

But this supposition, though industriously put forward by some politicians, unacquainted with what is best in our English nature, is, I think, utterly groundless. I do not attribute to the Duke of Wellington himself too rigid a political honesty. He, who after having stigmatized one day the Reform Bill, could undertake to carry it the next, may be supposed to have a mind, which, however locked and barred, the keys of state can open to conviction. But, let it be remembered, that his Grace stood then almost alone. All that was high and virtuous of his party refused to assist in his astonishing enterprise.

From Sir Robert Peel to Sir Robert Inglis—from the moderate to the ultra-Tory—every man who had tasted the sweets of character, recoiled from so gross a contamination. His three days' government fell at once. Now he is wiser—doubtless he *has formed* a government—doubtless, he has contrived to embrace in it the men who refused before. I believe, for the honour of my countrymen, that they have not receded from their principles now, any more than they receded then. And those principles are anti-reforming.

This is, then, their dilemma : either they will prosecute reform, or they will withhold it—either they will adhere to their former votes, or they will reverse them : in the one case, then, people of England, you will have uncompromising anti-reformers at your head,—in the other, you will have ambitious and grasping traitors. Let them extricate themselves from this dilemma if they can!

But, in fact, they have not this option. They are committed in every way to their old principles ; they are committed, first, to their own party, and secondly, to the King. Were they

as liberal as the Whigs, their friends would desert them, perhaps his Majesty would dismiss them. Their friends are the High Church party. High Church is the war cry they raise—High Church the motto of their banner. What is the High Church party? It is the party that is sworn to the abuses of the Church. Its members are pledged body and soul to the Bishops, and the Deans, and the Prebends, and the Universities, and the Orangemen of Ireland. They may give out that they think a great Church Reform is necessary; vague expression! what is great to their eyes would be invisible to ours. Will they—let us come to the point, and I will single out one instance—will they curtail the Protestant Establishment of Catholic Ireland? They have called the attempt “spoliation;” will they turn “spoliators?”—If so, they lose their friends, for no man supposes that the Tory churchmen have a chemical affinity to the Duke of Wellington—they have no affinity but that of interest: if he offend their interests, he offends the party. Let him but say, “that church has no congregation, but it gives 1500*l.* a year to

the parson ; I respect property—*the property of the people*—and they shall cease to pay, after the death of the incumbent, for receiving no benefit ;” and all the parsons of the country are in arms against him ! What a moment to suppose that he could do justice in such a case,—with the cheers of the Orangemen, and the ravings of Londonderry, and Roden, and Wicklow ringing in his ears !*

As for the claims of the Dissenters, who can imagine they will be attended to by the man who has called them atheists ? He may swallow his words, but can he swallow his friends of the colleges ? He cannot lose his great permanent support, the Church, for a temporary and hollow support which would forsake him the moment he had served its purpose.

The Corporations—what hope of reform there ? Every politician knows the Corporations are the

* See too the extracts from the Duke’s speeches appended to this letter. And while I am correcting these sheets, (Friday, Nov. 21,) in the Report of the Conservative Dinner in Kent, it is pleasing to find that the supporters of the Duke of Wellington are of opinion that the cause of THE GREAT SINECURE OF IRELAND, is the cause of all England ! Very true—but one is the plaintiff in the *cause*, the other the defendant !

strongholds of Toryism, and many of the truest liberals supported the government till the Corporation reform should be passed, in order to see, safely carried a measure against Toryism, only less important than the Reform Bill. To reform the Corporations will be to betray his own fortresses. Is the Duke of Wellington the man to do this?

But it is not to isolated measures that we are to look—the contest is not for this reform or the other—the two parties stand forth clear and distinct—they are no parties of names, but parties of opposite and irreconcilable interests. With the Duke of Wellington are incorporated those who have an interest in what belongs to an aristocratic, in opposition to a popular government, and he can concede nothing, or as little as possible, calculated to weaken the interests of his partizans. He is the incarnation of the House of Lords in opposition to the voice of the House of Commons.

Were he then a Reformer, the people would despise him, his friends would desert,* and we

* But he might suppose that the measure which lost a Tory would gain a liberal. Yes, for that measure only. The friend would be lost for ever, the enemy gained but for a night.

may add, the possibility that the King would dismiss him.

His Majesty, we are assured, has no personal dislike to the late premier: he lauds him as the most honourable of men—he blows up his government, and scatters chaplets over the ruin. It was not a dislike to his person, but to his principles that ensured his dismissal. Perhaps, had that accomplished and able minister condescended ‘to palter in a double sense’—to equivocate and dissemble, to explain his means, but to disguise his objects, he might still be in office. But it is known in the political world that he was an honest statesman—that whatever was his last conference with the King, he did not disguise in *former interviews* that reform must be an act as well as name—that a government to be strong must be strong in public gratitude and confidence—and perhaps, with respect to the particular reform of the Irish church, he may have delicately remarked, that the late Commission sanctioned by the King was not to amuse but to satisfy the people—that if its Report furnished a list of sine-

cure livings, there would be no satisfaction in wondering at the number—that to ascertain the manner and amount of abuses is only the prelude to their redress. This is reported of Lord Melbourne. I believe it, though not a syllable about any reform might have been introduced at the exact period of his removal. These, then, were the sentiments that displeased his Majesty, and to these sentiments he preferred the Duke of Wellington. He chose these new ministers because they would do less than his late ones. He can only give them his countenance so long as they fulfil his expectations.

I pass over as* altogether frivolous and absurd

* While the letter of Lord Brougham induces me to withdraw from the text three paragraphs relative to his lordship, I am obliged to subjoin them as notes, for the purpose of explaining those passages in the letter which refer to them, and of allowing the reader to judge for himself of the completeness of Lord Brougham's vindication, I desire their withdrawal from the text to be considered a proof of *my own* satisfaction with Lord Brougham's reply, and consequently of my most cheerful retraction of whatever wronged his principles or wounded his feelings. The first paragraph alluded to occurring after the words "the tittle-tattle of the day," ran thus:—"The King might or not be displeased at the speeches of Lord Brougham,—true, they might have offended the royal taste, but scarcely the royal politics—Heaven knows they were sufficiently conservative and sufficiently loyal;—they were much of the same character as

the tittle-tattle of the day ; as to whether the King was or was not displeased with the speeches of Lord Brougham. Displeasure at those speeches could scarcely have had *much* to do with his Majesty's resolve, or he would have sent, not for the Duke of Wellington, but the Earl of Durham ! I pass over with equal indifference the gossip that attacks the family of his Majesty. I know enough of courts to be sensible that we, who do not belong to them, are rarely well informed as to the influences which prevail in that charmed orbit ; and I am sufficiently imbued with the chivalry of an honest man not to charge women with errors of which they are probably innocent, and of the consequences of which they are almost invariably unaware. I can even conceive that were it true that his Majesty's royal consort, or the female part of his family, were able to exercise an influence over state affairs, they would be actuated by the most affectionate regard for his interests and his dignity. The views of women are necessa-

those his Majesty might hear whispered, not declaimed, from his next Chancellor at his own table."

rily confined to a narrow circle : their public opinion is not that of a wide and remote multitude. They are attracted, even in humble stations, by the “solemn plausibilities” of life—they feel an anxious interest for those connected with them, which often renders their judgment too morbidly jealous of the smallest apparent diminution of their splendor or their power. To imagine that the more firmly a monarch adheres to his prerogatives the more he secures his throne, is a mistake natural to their sex. If such of them as may be supposed to advise his Majesty did form and did act on such a belief, to my mind it would be a natural and even an excusable error. Neither while I lament the resolution of the King, am I blind to the circumstances of his situation. Called to the throne in times of singular difficulty—the advisers of his predecessor, whose reign had been peaceful and brilliant, on one side—a people dissatisfied with half reforms on the other—educated to consider the House of Lords at least as worthy of deference as the popular will—disappointed at finding that one concession, however great, could not content a people who demanded it, but as the means to an

end—turning to the most powerful organ of the Press, and reading that his liberal Ministers were unpopular, and that the country cared not *who* composed its government—seeing before him but two parties, besides the government party—the one headed by the idol of that people he began to fear, and the other by the most illustrious supporter of an order of things which in *past times* was the most favourable to monarchy ;—I cannot deem it altogether as much a miracle as a misfortune that he should be induced to make the experiment he has risked. But I do feel indignation at those—not women, but men—grey-haired and practical politicians, who must have been aware, if not of its utter futility, of its pregnant danger ; by whose assistance the King now adventures no holiday experiment.—For a poor vengeance or a worse ambition, they are hazarding the monarchy itself ; by playing the Knave they unguard the King. “ There are some men,” says Bacon, “ who are such great self-lovers, that they will burn down their neighbour’s house to roast their own eggs in the embers.” In the present instance their neighbour’s house may be a palace ! For

this is the danger—not (if the people be true to themselves) that the Duke of Wellington will crush liberty, but that the distrust of the Royal wisdom in the late events—the feeling of insecurity it produces—the abrupt exercise of one man’s prerogative to change the whole face of our policy, domestic, foreign, and colonial, without any assigned reason greater than the demise of old Lord Spencer—the indignation for the aristocracy, if the Duke should head it against Reform—the contempt for the aristocracy if the Duke should countermarch it *to* Reform—the release of all extremes of more free opinions, on the return which must take place, sooner or later, of a liberal administration ;—the danger is, lest these and similar causes should in times, when all institutions have lost the venerable moss of custom, and are regarded solely for their utility—induce a desire for stronger innovations than those *merely* of reform.

“ Nothing,” said a man who may be called the prophet of revolutions, “ destroys a monarchy while the people trust the King. But persons and things are too easily confounded, and to lose faith in the representative of an in-

stitution, forbodes the decease of the institution itself." Attached as I am by conviction to a monarchy for this country—an institution that I take the liberty humbly to say I have elsewhere vindicated, with more effect, perhaps, as coming from one known to embrace the cause of the people, than the more vehement declamations of slaves and courtiers—I view such a prospect with alarm. And not the less so, because Order is of more value than the Institutions which are but formed to guard it; and in the artificial and complicated affairs of this country, a struggle against monarchy would cost the tranquillity of a generation.

We are standing on a present, surrounded by fearful warnings from the past. The dismissal of a ministry too liberal for a King—too little liberal for the people, is to be found a common event in the stormiest pages of human history. It is like the parting with a common mediator, and leaves the two extremes to their own battle.

And now, my Lord, before I speak of what ought to be, and I am convinced will be the conduct of the people, who are about to be made the judge of the question at issue, let me say a

few words upon the Cabinet that is no more. I am not writing a panegyric on the Whigs—I leave that to men who wore their uniform and owned their leaders. I have never done so. In the palmiest days of their power, I stooped not the knee to them. By vote, pen, and speech, I have humbly but honestly asserted my own independence ; and I had my reward in the sarcasms and the depreciation of that party which seemed likely for the next quarter of a century to be the sole dispensers of the ordinary prizes of ambition. No matter. I wanted not their favours, and could console myself for the thousand little obstacles, by which a powerful party can obstruct the parliamentary progress of one who will not adopt their errors. I do not write the panegyric of the Whigs, and though I am not one of those who can be louder in vituperation when the power is over, than in warning before the offence is done, I have not, I own, the misplaced generosity to laud now the errors which I have always lamented. It cannot be denied, my Lord, or at least *I* cannot deny it, that the Whig government disappointed the people.

And by the Whig government I refer to that of my Lord Grey. Not so much because it did not go far enough, as with some ill judged partizans is contended, but rather because it went too far. It went too far, my Lord, when its first act was to place Sir Charles Sutton in the Speaker's chair,—it went too far when it passed the Coercion Bill—it went too far when it defended Sinecures—it went too far when it marched its army to protect the Pension list.—It might have denied many popular changes—if it had not defended and enforced unpopular measures.—It could not do all that the people expected, but where was the necessity of doing what the people never dreamt of? Some might have regretted when it was solely Whig—but how many were disgusted when it seemed three parts Tory! Nor was this all—much that it did was badly done: there was a want of practical knowledge in the principle and the details of many of its measures—it often blundered and it often bungled. But these were the faults of a *past* Cabinet. The Cabinet of Lord Melbourne had *not been* tried. There was a vast difference between the two adminis-

trations, and that difference was this—in the one the more liberal party was *the minority*, in the other it was *the majority*. In the Cabinet of the late Premier, the weight of Sir John Hobhouse, Lord Duncannon, and the Earl of Mulgrave was added to the scale of the people. There was in the Cabinet just dissolved a majority of men whose very reputation was the popular voice, whose names were as worm-wood to the Tories, and to whom it is amusing to contrast the language applied by the Tory Journals with that which greeted “in liquid lines mellifluously bland,” the luke-warm reformers they supplanted. Lord Melbourne’s Cabinet had not been tried—*It is tried now*—THE KING HAS DISMISSED IT IN FAVOUR OF THE DUKE OF WELLINGTON! His Majesty took the earliest opportunity and the faintest pretext in the royal power to prove that he thought it more liberal than the Cabinet which preceded it. If some cry out with the Tories—“Nay, what said Lord Brougham at the Edinburgh dinner?” the answer is obvious. Even giving the most unfavourable construction to that memorable

and much-canvassed speech, it is enough to remind the people that Lord Brougham; though a great orator and a great man, able to play many parts, cannot fill up the whole *rôles* of the Cabinet. Three other Cabinet ministers were present, Sir John Hobhouse, Mr. Ellice, Mr. Abercromby. Have at least *their* sentiments been misconstrued? and were not those sentiments loud in sympathy with the opinions of Lord Durham. Did not they too lament every hour that passed over “recognized and unreformed abuses?” Suppose what we will of the sentiments of the ex-Chancellor, three of his colleagues before his very face uttered only the sentiments which were those of the people when they elected a reformed parliament for the support of reforming ministers. *By these three speakers, then, at least, we can unequivocally judge of what the government would have done.* The majority of the Cabinet were of the principles of these speakers. Had even Lord Brougham been an obstacle to those principles when they came to be discussed in the Cabinet,

Lord Brougham would have succumbed and *not* the principles.*

Wih Lord Melbourne it was my lot in early youth to be brought in contact, and, though our acquaintance has now altogether ceased, (for I am not one who seeks to refresh the memories of men in proportion as they become great,) I still retain a lively impression of his profundity as a scholar—of his enthusiasm at generous sentiments—and of that happy frame of mind he so peculiarly possesses, and of which the stuff of Statesmen is best made, at once practical and philosophical, large enough to conceive principles,—

* And now, in Lord Brougham's Letter, we learn from himself that he was behind none of his colleagues in the support and preparation of reforms. In the former editions the second paragraph now withdrawn from the text, was as follows:—"Of the conduct of that remarkable man it is not now necessary to speak; nor is it by these hasty lines, nor perhaps by so unable a hand, that so intricate a character can be accurately and profoundly analysed. When the time comes that *may* restore him to office, it will be the fitting season for shrewder judges of character than I am, to speak firmly and boldly of his merits or his faults. At present it is no slight blame to one so long in public life—so eminent and so active—to say that his friends consider him a riddle: if he be misconstrued, whose fault is it but his own? When the Delphic oracle could be interpreted two ways, what wonder that the world grew at last to consider it a cheat!"

—close enough to bring them to effect.* Could we disentangle and remove ourselves from the present, could we fancy ourselves in a future age, it might possibly be thus that an historian would describe him :—“ Few persons could have been selected by a king, as prime minister, in those days of violent party, and of constant change, who were more fitted by nature and circumstances to act *with* the people, but *for* the King. A Politician probably less ardent than sagacious, he was exactly the man to conform to the genius of a particular time ;—to know how far to go with prudence—where to stop with success ; not vehement in temper, not inordinate in ambition, he was not likely to be hurried away by private objects, affections, or resentments. To the moment of his elevation as premier, it can scarcely be said of his political life that it affords one example of imprudence. ‘ *Not to commit himself,*’ was at one time

* I imagined him susceptible only to the charge of indolence, and I once imputed to him that fault. On learning from those who can best judge, that in office at least the imputation was unjust, I took, long since, the opportunity of a new edition to efface it from the work in which the imputation was made

supposed to be his particular distinction. His philosophy was less that which deals with abstract doctrines than that which teaches how to command shifting and various circumstances. He seldom preceded his time, and never stopped short of it. Add to this, that with a searching knowledge of mankind, he may have sought to lead, but never to deceive, them. His was the high English statesmanship which had not recourse to wiles or artifice. He was one whom a king might have trusted, for he was not prone to deceive himself, and he would not deceive another. His judgment wary—his honour impregnable. Such was the minister who, if not altogether that which the people would have selected, seems precisely that which a king should have studied to preserve. He would not have led, as by a more bold and vigorous genius, Lord Durham, equally able, equally honest, with perhaps a yet deeper philosophy, the result of a more masculine and homely knowledge of mankind, and a more prophetic vision of the spirit of the age, might have done; he would not have *led* the People to

good government, but they would have marched with them side by side.”

Such, I believe, will be the outline of the character Lord Melbourne will bequeath to a calmer and more remote time. And this is not my belief alone. I observe that most of those independent members who had been gradually detached from the cabinet of Lord Grey, looked with hope and friendly dispositions to that of his successor. In most of the recent public meetings and public dinners where the former Cabinet was freely blamed, there was a willingness to trust the later one. And even those who would have wreaked on the government their suspicions of the Chancellor were deterred by Lord Durham's honest eulogium on the Premier. This much then we must concede to the Melbourne administration. First, it went a step beyond Lord Grey's, it embraced the *preponderating*, instead of the *lesser*, number of men of the more vigorous and liberal policy. The faults of Lord Grey's government are not fairly chargeable upon it. Men of the independent party hoped more from it.

Secondly, by what we know, it seems to have been in earnest as to its measures, for we know this, that the Corporation Reform was in preparation—that the Commission into the Irish Church had produced reports which were to be fairly acted upon—that a great measure of justice to Ireland was to be based upon the undeniable evidence which that Commission afforded of her wrongs. We know this,—and knowing no more, we see the Cabinet dissolved,—presumption in its favour, since we have seen its successor !

But, my Lord, if we may speak thus in favour of that Cabinet which your abilities adorned, and in hope of the services which it would have rendered us, we must not forget that we are about in the approaching election, to have not the *expectation* of good government, but the *power* of securing it. We must demand from the candidates who are disposed to befriend and restore you, not vague assurances of support to one set of men or the other, to the principles of Lord Grey or those of Lord Melbourne, but to the principles of the people. Your friends must speak out, and boldly—they must place a wide

distinction, by candid and explicit declarations, between themselves and their Tory antagonists. Sir Edward Sugden said at Cambridge that he was disposed to reform temperately all abuses. The Emperor of Russia would say the same. Your partizans must specify *what* abuses they will reform, and to *what extent* they will go. The people must see, on the one hand, defined reform, in order to despise indefinite reformers on the other. Let your friends come forward manfully and boldly as befits honest men in stirring times, and the same people who gave the last majority to Lord Grey, will give an equal support to a cabinet yet more liberal, *and dismissed only because it was felt to be in earnest*. I know what the conduct of all who are temperate and honest among reformers ought to be. It is the cry of those who have compromised themselves with their constituents in their too implicit adherence to the measures of Lord Grey, that “All differences must cease—Whig and Radical must forget their small dissensions—all must unite against a common enemy.” A convenient cry for them; they are willing now to confound themselves with us, to take shelter under our popularity!—For *we*,

my Lord—and let this be a lesson to the next Parliament—we are safe. Of us who have not subscribed implicitly to Lord Grey's government—of us who have been *more liberal* than that government—of us who have not defended its errors, nor, what was worse, defended the errors of its Tory predecessors,—I do not believe that a *single member* will lose his seat ! The day of election will be to us a day of triumph. We have not enjoyed the emoluments and honours of a victorious party—we have not basked in the ministerial smiles—we have been depreciated by lame humour, as foolish and unthinking men, and stigmatized by a lamer calumny as revolutionary Destructives. But we had our consolation—we have found it in our consistency and our conscience—in our own self-acquittal, and in the increased esteem of our constituents. And now they need our help ! Shall they have it ? I trust yes ! * I trust, and I

* The third paragraph now withdrawn runs thus :—“ We can forgive jests at our expense, for nobody applauded them, and they were not echoed, my Lord, by the majority of the Cabinet. One man might disavow us—one man might not enter our house

feel assured, that we shall forget minor differences, when we have great and ineffaceable distinctions to encounter. I trust that we shall show we are sensible we have it now in our power to prove that we fought for no selfish cause—that we were not thinking of honors and office for ourselves—that we shall show we wished to make our *principles*, not our *interests*, triumphant;—willing that others should be the agents for carrying them into effect. This should be our sentiment, and this our revenge. All men who care for liberty should unite—all private animosities, all partial jealousies should be merged. We should remember only that some of us have advocated good measures more than others; but that, the friends of the New Ministry have opposed all. Haroun Alraschid, the caliph of immortal memory, went out one night disguised, as was his wont, and attended by his favourite Giaffer;—they

nor travel by our coach, (it is not *we* who have now pulled down the house, or upset the conveyance!) but three of his colleagues asserted our principles, and we felt that there spoke the preponderating voice of the ministry.”

pretended to be merchants in distress, and asked charity. The next morning two candidates for a place in the customs appeared before the divan. The sultan gave the preference to one of them. “Sire,” whispered Giaffer, “don’t you recollect that that man only gave us a piece of silver when we asked for a piece of gold?” “And don’t you recollect,” answered Haroun, “that the other man, when we asked for a piece of silver, called for a cudgel?”

Looking temperately back at the proceedings of the Whigs, we must confess that they have greater excuses, than at the time we were aware of. “Who shall read,” says the proverb, “the inscrutable heart of kings?” We could not tell how far the Monarch was with us: rumours and suspicions were afloat—but we were unwilling to believe them of William the Reformer. We imagined his Majesty, induced by secret and invisible advisers, might indeed be timid, and reluctant; but we imagined, also, that the government, by firmness, might bias the royal judgment to a consistent and uniformly paternal policy. Many of us,

(though, for my own part, I foresaw and foretold* that the Tory party, so far from being crushed, were but biding their time, scotched not killed)—many of us supposed the Tories more humbled and more out of the reach of office, than the Cabinet, with a more prophetic vision, must have felt they were! With a House of Lords, which the Ministers had neither the power to command nor to reform—with a King, whose secret, and it may be stubborn inclinations, are now apparent,—surrounded by intrigues and cabals, and sensible that the alternative of a Tory government was not so impossible as the public believed, we must, in common candour, make many excuses for men, who, however inclined to the people, had also every natural desire to preserve the balance of the constitution—to maintain the second chamber, and to pay to the wishes of the King that deference, which, as the third voice of the legislature, his Majesty is entitled to receive. Add to this, if they resigned office, the King would have had the excuse he has not now : he would have had *no alternative but a*

* England and the English.

Tory Cabinet! It is, true, however, that so beset with difficulties, their wisest course would have been to remember the end and origin of all government—have thrown themselves on the people and abided the consequences—and that, my Lord, is exactly what I believe your colleagues and yourself intended to do, and it is for that reason you are dismissed. A few months will show; a few months will allow you to explain yourselves; but I should not address to your Lordship this letter—I should not commit myself to a vain prophecy—I should not voluntarily incur your own contempt for my simplicity, if I had not the fullest reason to believe, that the occasion is only wanting to acquit yourselves to the public.

—Considering these circumstances with candour—the situation of the last ministry—the dissolution of the present, and the reasons for that dissolution; considering also the first enthusiasm of the Reform Bill, which induced so many members, with the purest motives, to place confidence in the men who had obtained

it;—we shall find now excuses for much of whatever temporising we may yet desire for the future to prevent : and to prevent it must be our object at the next election. On all such members of the Whig majority as will declare for the future for a more energetic and decided conduct, so as to lead the government through counteracting obstacles, and both encourage, if willing, and force it, if hesitating, to a straightforward and uncompromising policy, the electors cannot but look with indulgence. Such candidates have only to own on their part, that any dallying with “ recognized abuse ” has been the result not of inclination, but of circumstance, and the difficulties of circumstance will be at once remembered. For those who will not make this avowal, whatever their name, they are but Tories at heart, and as such they must be considered. This is what the late Cabinet itself, if I have construed it rightly, must desire; and if we act thus, with union and with firmness, with charity to others, but with justice to our principles, we shall return to the next Parliament a vast ma-

majority of men who will secure the establishment of a government that no intrigue can undermine, no oligarchy supplant ; based upon a broad union of all reformers, and entitled to the gratitude of the people, not by perpetually reminding it of one obligation, but by constantly feeding it with new ones. Of such a Cabinet I know that you, my Lord, will be one ; and I believe that you will find yourself not perhaps among *all*, but among *many* of your old companions, and no longer without the services of one man in particular whose name is the synonym of the people's confidence. Taught by experience,* there must then be no compromise with foes—no Whig organ holding out baits of office to Sir Robert Peel—no crowding popular offices with Tory malcontents

* And we have the assurance from one of the organs of the late ministers, in an article admirable for its temper and its tenets, that this lesson is already taught. “ The leaders of the liberal party must have at last learned the utter futility of every attempt to conciliate the supporters of existing abuses—they must now know that secret enmity is ever watching the occasion of wounding them unawares, and *that the public men who would contend against it can only maintain themselves by exhibiting a frank and full reliance on the popular support, and meriting it by an unflinching assertion of popular principles.*”—*Globe*, Nov. 17.

—no ceding to an anti-national interest, however venerable its name—no clipping to please the Lords—no refusing to unfurl the sail when the wind is fair, unless Mrs. Partington will promise not to mop up the ocean!

At present we are without a government; we have only a dictator. His Grace the Duke of Wellington outbids my Lord Brougham in versatility. He stands alone, the representative of all the offices of this great empire. India is in one pocket, our colonies in the other*—see him now at the Home Office, and now at the Horse Guards; Law, State, and Army, each at his command—Jack of all trades, and master of none—but that of war;—we ask for a cabinet, and see but a soldier.

Meanwhile, eager and panting, flies the Courier to Sir Robert Peel!—grave Sir Robert! How well we can picture his prudent face!—with what solemn swiftness will he obey the call! how demurely various must be his meditations!—how ruffled his stately motions at the night-and-day celerity of his homeward progress! Can this be

* “His grace will superintend generally the affairs of the government, till the return of Sir Robert Peel.” So says the Morning Post. But the Post is very angry if any one else says the same.

the slow Sir Robert? No! I beg pardon, *he* is not to discompose himself. I see, by the papers, that it is only the Courier that is to go at “minute speed”—the Neophyte of Reform is to travel “by easy stages”—we must wait patiently his movements—God knows we shall want patience by and by;—his stages will be easy enough in the road the Times wishes him to travel!

The new political Hamlet!—how applicable the situation of his parallel!—how well can his Horatio, (Twiss,) were he himself the courier, break forth with the exposition of the case—

“Fortinbras*

Of unimproved mettle hot and full,

Sharks up a list of *brainless* resolute

For food and diet to some enterprise,

That hath a stomach in't, *which is no other,*

As it doth well appear unto the state,

—But to recover for us by strong hand,

And terms compulsory, our—‘offices.’

This, I take it,

Is the main motive of our preparations,

* Fontinbras, Anglice “Strong Arm”—literally “the Duke.”

The source of this our watch, and the chief head
Of this post-haste and romage in the land!

[*Enter the Ghost of the old Tory Rule.*]

“ ’Tis here—’tis here—’tis gone !”

[*Now appears Hamlet himself, arms folded, brow thoughtful.—Sir Robert was always a solemn man !*]

[*Enter the same Ghost of Tory Ascendancy, in the likeness of old Sir Robert.*]

“ My father’s spirit in arms !

Thou com’st in such a questionable shape,
 That I will speak to thee.

“ Tell,

Why thy canonized bones, hearsed in death,

Have burst their cerements.”

Whereat good Horatio wooingly observes—

“ It beckons you to go away with it.”

Our Hamlet is in doubt. The Tory sway was an
 excellent thing when alive, but to follow the
 ghost now, may lead to the devil ; nevertheless,
 Horatio says, shrewdly,

“ The very *place* puts toys of desperation,

Without more motive, into every brain !”

The temptation is too great, poor Hamlet is decoyed, and the wise Marcellus, (the Herries of the play,) disinterestedly observes,

“ Let’s follow !”

Alas ! we may well exclaim, then, with the soft Horatio,

“ To what issue will this come ?”

And reply with the sensible Marcellus, who sums up the whole affair.

“ *Something is rotten in the state of Denmark !*”

We need not further pursue the parallel, though inviting, especially in that passage, where to be taken for a rat, is the prelude to destruction. Leave we Hamlet undisturbed to his soliloquy,

“ To be, or not to be—that is the question.”

And that question is unresolved. Will Sir Robert Peel commit himself *at last*—will he join the administration—will he, prudent and

wary, set the hopes of his party, the reputation of his life, on the hazard of a dye, thrown not for Whigs and Tories—but for Toryism, it is true, on the one hand, and a government far more energetic than Whiggism on the other, with all the chances attendant on the upset of the tables in the meanwhile? The game is not for the restoring, it is for the annihilation, of the *juste milieu*! If he join the gamesters, let him; we can yet give startling odds on the throw. But may he see distinctly his position! If he withdraw from this rash and ill-omened government, if he remain neutral, he holds the highest station in the eyes of the country, which one of his politics can ever hope to attain. It is true, that office may be out of his reach, but to men of a large and a generous ambition, there are higher dignities than those which office can bestow. He will stand A POWER IN HIMSELF—a man true to principle, impervious to temptation; he will vindicate nobly, not to this time only, but to posterity, his single change upon the Catholic Emancipation; he will prove that no sordid considerations influenced that decision. He will stand alone

and aloft, with more than the practical sense, with all the moral weight of Chateaubriand—one whom all parties must honour, whose counsels must be respected by the most liberal, as by the most Tory, cabinet. Great in his talents—greater in his position—greatest in his honour. But if he mix himself irrevocably with the insane and unprincipled politicians, who now seek either to deceive or subdue the people, he is lost for ever. That ministry have but this option, to refuse all reform and to brave the public, or to carry, in contempt of all honesty, measures at least as liberal as those which he, as well as they, opposed when proceeding from the Whigs. Will he be mad enough to do the one—will he be base enough to do the other? Can he be a tyrant, or will he be a turncoat? His may be the ambition which moderate men have assigned to him—an ambition prudent and sincere:—His maybe a name on which the posterity that reads of these eventful times, will look with approval and respect;—on the other hand, the alternative is not tempting—it is to be deemed the creature of office, and the dupe

of the Duke of Wellington! Imagine his situation, rising to support either the measures which must be carried by the soldiers, or those which would have been proposed by the Whigs—bully or hypocrite;—what an alternative for one who can yet be (how few in this age may become the same!) A GREAT MAN! And this too, mainly from one quality that he has hitherto carried to that degree in which it becomes genius. That quality is Prudence! all his reputation depends on his never being indiscreet! He is in the situation of a prude of a certain age, who precisely because she may be a saint, the world has a double delight in damning as a sinner. Sweet, tempted Innocence, beware the one false step! turn from the old Duke! list not the old Lord Eldon! allow not his Grace of Cumberland (irresistible seducer!) to come too near! O Susanna, Susanna, what lechers these Elders are!

But enough of speculation for the present on an uncertain event. We have only now to look to what is sure, and that is a New Parliament.*

* Since writing the above, it seems to be a growing opinion among men of all parties, that if Sir Robert Peel join the

They hint at the policy of trying *this* : LET THEM ! I think they would dissolve us the second day of our meeting!

And now, my Lord, deviating from the usual forms of correspondence, permit me, instead of addressing your Lordship, to turn for a few moments to our mutual friends—the Electors of England.

I wish them, clearly and distinctly, to understand, the grounds and the results of the contest we are about to try. I do not write these

Ministers, they *will* meet Parliament—for the sake of *mutual explanations* !—But the Duke is a prompt man, and loves to take us by surprise—we *must be prepared* !

Addendum to Third Edition.—And now we have additional reason to be prepared, and to acknowledge how little to-morrow can depend on the reports of to-day.

“ We owe it to our readers to acknowledge that we have much less hope of a dissolution of parliament being dispensed with than we had on Saturday. The caballing of the metropolitan members, and a repetition of the kind of display made on Friday at Stroud, may render it impossible for any government, not prepared to sacrifice the King, to go on with the present House of Commons.”—(*Standard*, Nov. 24.) Let other than the metropolitan members cabal ! Let there be other displays than those at Stroud ! We see the force attached to these demonstrations ; we have no cause to fear a dissolution ; the threat does not awe us ;—we would *not* sacrifice the King, and *therefore* we would rescue him from his advisers.

lines for the purpose of converting the Conservatives—far from me so futile an attempt. What man of sense can *now* dream of the expediency of attempting to convert our foes? There is but one apostle capable of such a miracle, and its name is—*office*! I write only to that great multitude of men of all grades of property and rank, who returned to the Reformed Parliament its vast reforming majority. Thank God, that electoral body is *as yet* unaltered. Who knows, if it now neglect its duty, how long it may remain the same! I have before spoken, Electors of England, of what seems to me likely to be your conduct. But let us enter into that speculation somewhat more minutely. There are some who tell us that you are indifferent to the late changes, and careless of the result,—who laugh at the word “Crisis” and disown its application. Are you yourselves, then, thoroughly awakened to your position, to the mighty destinies at your command? I will not dwell at length upon the fearful anxiety with which your decision will be looked for in Foreign Nations; for we must confess, that engrossed as we have lately been in domestic

affairs, Foreign Nations have for us but a feeble and lukewarm interest. But we are still THE GREAT ENGLISH PEOPLE, the slightest change in whose constitutional policy vibrates from corner to corner of the civilized world. We are still that people, who have grown great, not by the extent of our possessions, not by the fertility of our soil, not by the wild ambition of our conquests ; but, by the success of our commerce, and the preservation of our liberties. The influence of England has been that of a moral power, not derived from regal or oligarchic, or aristocratic ascendancy ; but from the enterprise and character of her people. We are the Great Middle Class of Europe. When Napoleon called us a *bourgeoise* nation, in one sense of the word he was right. What the middle class is to us, that we are to the world !—a part of the body politic of civilization, remote alike from Ochlocracy* and Despotism, and draw-

* Ochlocracy, Mob-rule ; the proper antithesis to democracy, which (though perverted from its true signification) is People-rule. Tories are often great ochlocrats, as their favourite mode of election, in which mobs are bought with beer, can testify. Lord Chandos's celebrated clause in the Reform Bill was ochlo-

ing its dignity—its power—its very breath—from its freedom. The Duke of Wellington and his band are to be in office: for when we are met with the cry, “Perhaps the Duke himself will not take office at all,” what matters it to us whether he be before the stage or behind the scenes—whether he represent the borough *himself*, or appoint his *nominees*—the *votes* will be the same!—The Duke and his band are to be in office! what to the last hour have been their foreign politics?—wherever tyranny the grossest was to be defended—wherever liberty the most moderate was to be assailed—*there* have they lent their aid! The King of Holland trampling on his subjects was “our most ancient ally,” whom “nothing but the worst revolutionary doctrines could induce us to desert.” Charles X. vainly urging his Ordinances against the Parliament and the Press at the point of the bayonet, was an “injured monarch,” and the people “a rebellious mob.” The despotism of Austria is an “admirable government”—with Russia it is “insocratic. Ochlocracy is the plebeian partner of oligarchy, carrying on the business under another name. The extremes meet, or, as the Eastern proverb informs us, when the serpent wants to seem innocent, it puts its tail in its mouth!

lence" to interfere in behalf of Poland. Miguel himself, blackened by such crimes as the worst period of the Roman empire cannot equal, is eulogized as "the illustrious victim of foreign swords." Not the worst excesses that belong to despotism, from the bonds of the negro to the blood of a people, have been beneath the praises of your present government—not the most moderate resistance that belongs to liberty has escaped their stigma. This is no exaggeration; chapter and verse, their very speeches are before us, and out of their own mouths do we condemn them. Can we then be insensible, little as we may regard our more subtle relations with foreign states—can we be insensible to the links which bind us with our fellow creatures; no matter in what region of the globe? Can we feel slightly the universal magnitude of the interests now resting on our resolves? Believe me, wherever the insolence of power is brooding on new restraints, wherever—some men, "in the chamber of dark thought," are forging fetters for other countries or their own—*there* is indeed a thrill of delight at the accession of the Duke of Wellington! But wherever Liberty struggles successfully, or suffers

in vain—wherever Opinion has raised its voice—wherever Enlightenment is at war with Darkness, and Patience rising against Abuse—there will be but one feeling of terror at these changes, and one feeling of anxious hope for the resolution which you, through whose votes speaks the voice of England, may form at this awful crisis. Shall that decision be unworthy of you?

If we pass from foreign nations to Ireland, (which unhappily we have often considered as foreign to us,) what can we expect from the Duke of Wellington's tender mercies? Recollect that there will be no peace for England while Ireland remains as it is. Cabinet after Cabinet has been displaced, change after change has convulsed us, measures the most vital to England have been unavoidably postponed to discussion on Bills for Ireland; night upon night, session upon session of precious time have been thrown away, because we have not done for Ireland what common sense would dictate to common justice. I have just returned from that country. I have seen matters with my own eyes. Having assuredly no sympathy with the ques-

tion of Repeal, I have not sought the judgment of Repealers—of the two, I have rather solicited that of the Orangemen : for knowing by what arguments misgovernment can be assailed, I was anxious to learn, in its strong-hold, by what arguments misgovernment can be defended. And I declare solemnly, that it seems to me the universal sentiment of all parties, that God does not look down upon any corner of the earth in which the people are more supremely wretched, or in which a kind, fostering, and paternal government is more indispensably needed. That people are Catholic. Hear what the Duke of Wellington deems necessary for them.

“The object of the government, (for Ireland,) after the passing of the Roman Catholic Relief Bill, should have been to do all in their power to conciliate—whom? The Protestants! Every thing *had been granted to the Roman Catholics that they could require!*”—*The Duke of Wellington's Speech. Hansard, p. 950, vol. xix. 3rd Series.* Every thing a people groaning under each species of exaction that ever took the name of religion can require! This statement may de-

light the Orangemen, but will it content Ireland? *that* is the question. As for the Orangemen themselves, with their Christian zeal, and their Mahometan method of enforcing it ;—with their—
 “here is our Koran,” and “there is our sword,”
 —they remind us only of that ingenious negro, to whom his master, detecting him in some offence, put the customary query—“What, sir, do you never make use of your bible?—“Yes, massa, *me trap my razor on it sometime !*” So, with these gentlemen, they seem to think that the only use of the bible is to sharpen their steels upon it !

The story of the Negro recalls us to the Colonies : what effect will this change have upon the fate of the late Slave Population? By our last accounts, the managers, instead of co-operating with the local authorities, were rather *striving* to exasperate the Negroes into conduct, which must produce a failure of that grand experiment of humanity.—The news arrives,—(*just before Christmas too*,—what a season !) the managers see in office, the very men, who not only opposed the experiment, but who

prophesied the failure:—they know well, that if the failure occur, it is not *to them*, that the new government will impute the blame—they know well that a prophet is rarely displeased with the misfortunes he foretells. Is there no danger in all this? And shall we be told that this is *no crisis*? that there is nothing critical in these changes—nothing to reverse or even to affect our relations with Ireland, the Colonies, and the Continent—nothing that we should lament, and nothing that we should fear?

And now, looking only to ourselves, is there nothing critical in the state of *England*?

You must remember that whatever parliament you elect *will have the right of remodelling that parliament*! The same legislative power that reformed can un-reform. If you give to the Duke of Wellington a majority in the House of Commons, you give him the whole power of this Empire for six years. If a liberal House of Commons should ever go too far, you have a King and a House of Lords to stop the progress. If a conservative House of Commons should go too far in the opposite extreme, who will

check its proceedings? You may talk of public opinion—you may talk of resistance—but when your *three* branches of the legislature are against you, with what effect could you resist? You might talk vehemently—could you act successfully;—when you were no longer supported by your representatives,—when to act would be to rebel! The law and the army would be both against you. How can you tell to what extent the one might be stretched or the other increased? Vainly then would you say, “In our next parliament we will be wiser;” in *your next* parliament the people might be no longer the electors! There cannot be a doubt but that, if the parliament summoned by the Duke be inclined to support the Duke, the provisions of the Reform Bill will be changed. Slight alterations in the franchise—raising it where men are free, lowering it where men can be intimidated; making it different for towns and for agricultural districts, working out in detail the principles of Lord Chandos, may suffice to give you a constituency of slaves. This is no idle fear—the Reform Transformed

will be the first play the new company will act, if you give them a stage—it is a piece they have got by heart! Over and over again have they said at their clubs, in public and in private, that the Reform Bill ought to be altered.* They may now disavow any such intention. Calling themselves reformers, they may swear to protect reform. But how can you believe them? “Abu Rafe is witness to the fact, but who *will be witness for Abu Rafe?*”† By their own con-

* And Lord Strangford seems to speak out pretty boldly at the Ashford dinner. “It was true that among the institutions of the country, there was something that *might* be amended and improved, but there was much more that required to be placed in its *pristine state of purity*. *That that would come to pass* he felt sure, when he saw so many around him thinking as he did,” &c. Pristine state of purity! But what so pure as the rotten boroughs? What so pure as the old parliamentary system? And if the restoration of these immaculate blessings depends upon seeing “many around him who thought as he did,” where will his Lordship find those of that philosophy, except in the party now in power? It matters not *what* Lord Strangford meant should be restored to its pristine purity. He may say it was *not* the old parliamentary system. What was it then? Is there a *single thing* which the Reformed Parliament has altered that the people wish to see restored to “its pristine purity?” But then we are told that we are not to judge the Duke by the language of his supporters. By what are we to judge of him then? Either by their language or his own: it is quite indifferent which. But perhaps Tory speeches are like witches’ prayers, and are to be read backwards!

† Gibbon.

fessions, if they call themselves reformers, they would be liars; if they are false in one thing, will they not be false in another? Are they to be trusted because they own they have been insincere? If we desire to know in what light even the most honourable Tories consider public promises, shall we forget *Sir George Murray and the dissenters*? Do not fancy they will not hazard an attempt on your liberties—they *will* hazard it, if you place the House of Commons in their hands. Whatever their fault, it is not that of a want of courage. You talk of Public Opinion—history tells us that public opinion can be kept down. It is the nature of slavery, that as it creeps on, it accustoms men to its yoke. They may *feel*, but they are not willing always to *struggle*. Where was the iron-hearted Public Opinion, that confronted the first Charles, threw its shield round the person of Hampden, abolished the star-chamber, and vindicated the rights of England, when, but a few years afterwards, a less accomplished and a more unprincipled monarch, sent Sydney to the block—judges decided

against law—Parliament itself was suspended—and the tyrant of England was the pensioner of France? The *power* of public opinion woke afterwards in the reign of James II. but from how shameful a slumber—and to what even greater perils than that of domestic tyranny, had we not been exposed in the interval! Nothing but the forbearance of the Continent itself saved us from falling a prey to whatever vigorous despot might have conceived the design. With the same angry, but impotent dejection with which Public Opinion beheld the country spoiled of its Parliament—its martyrs consigned to the block—its governors harlots, and its King a hireling—it saw, unavenged, the Dutch fleet riding up the Thames,—the war-ships of England burnt before the very eyes of her Capital,—and “the nation,” to quote even Hume’s courtly words, “*though the King ever appeared but in sport(!)*” exposed to the ruin and ignominy of a foreign conquest.” Happily, Austria then was not as it is now—profound in policy, stern in purpose, indomitable in its hate to England; Russia was not looking abroad for conquests, aspiring to the

Indian Empire, and loathing the freemen who dare to interfere for Poland. We were saved, but not by your Public Opinion ! You may boast of the nineteenth century, and say, such things cannot happen to-day ; but the men of Cromwell's time boasted equally of the spirit of the seventeenth, and were equally confident, that liberty was eternal ? And even at this day have we not seen in France, how impotent is mere opinion ? Have not the French lost all the fruits of their Revolution ? Are not the Ordinances virtually carried ? and why ? Because the French parted with the power out of their own hands, under the idea that public opinion was a power sufficient in itself ? When the man first persuaded the horse to try (*by way of experiment*) the saddle and bridle, what was his argument ?—"My good friend, you are much stronger than I am ; you can kick me off again if you don't like me—your will is quite enough to dislodge me ;—come—the saddle—it is but a ride, recollect !—come, open your mouth—Lord have mercy, what fine teeth !—how you could bite if I displeased you. So so, old boy !" —

Ask them if they will support the Duke of

What's the moral? The man is riding the horse to this day!—Public opinion is but the expression of the prevalent power. The people have now the power, and public opinion is its voice; let them give away the power, and what is opinion?—*vox*, (indeed,) *et præterea nihil*—the voice and—nothing more!

It is madness itself in you, who have now the option of confirming or rejecting the Duke of Wellington's government, to hesitate in your choice. They tell you to try the men; have you not tried them before? Has not the work of reform been solely to undo what they have done? If your late governments could not proceed more vigorously, *who opposed them?*

“Hark! in the lobby hear a lion roar;

Say, Mr. Speaker, shall we shut the door?

Or, Mr. Speaker, shall we let him in,

To ——— *try if we can turn him out again!*”

You may say, that amongst the multiplicity of candidates who present themselves, and amongst the multiplicity of their promises, you may be unable to decide who will be your friends, who not. You have one test that cannot fail you. Ask them if they will support the Duke of

Wellington. If they say “ Yes, if he reform,” you will know that they will support him if he apostatizes. He who sees no dishonour in apostacy, waits but his price to apostatize himself. “ Away,” said Mr. Canning, long since—“ Away with the cant of measures, *not men*. The idle supposition, that it is the *harness*, not the horses that draw the chariot along.” “ In times of difficulty and danger, it is to the energy and *character* of individuals, that a nation must be indebted for its salvation !”—the energy and character ! Doubtless, the Duke has at present energy and character ! I grant it ; but if he exert in *your* behalf the energy, will he keep the character ? or if he preserve his character, how will you like his energy ?

Recollect that it is not for measures which you can foresee that caution is necessary, it is for measures that you *cannot* foresee ; it is not for what the Duke may profess to do, but for what he may dare to do, that you must not put yourselves under his command. Be not led away by some vague promises of taking off this tax and lowering that. *The empire is not for sale !* We, who gave twenty millions to purchase freedom for the negro, are

not to accept a bribe for the barter of our own. One tax too may be taken off, but others *may be put on!* They may talk to you of the first, but they will say nothing of the last! Malt is a good thing, but even malt may be bought too dear? Did not the Tories blame Lord Althorp for reducing taxation too much? Are they the men likely to empty the Exchequer? To drop a shilling in the street was the old trick of those who wanted to pick your pockets! Remember that you are not fighting the battle between Whigs and Tories; if the Whigs return to office, they must be more than Whigs; you are now fighting for things not men—for *the real consequences of your reform.* In your last election your gratitude made you fight too much for names; it was enough for your candidates to have served Lord Grey; you must now return those who will serve the people. If you are lukewarm, if you are indifferent, if you succumb, you will deserve the worst. But if you exert yourselves once more, with the same honesty, the same zeal, the same firm and enlightened virtue as two years ago ensured your triumph,—wherever, both now and

henceforth, men honour faith, or sympathise with liberty, there will be those who will record your struggle, and rejoice in its success. These are no exaggerated phrases : you may or may not be insensible to the character of the time ;—you may or may not be indifferent to the changes that have taken place—but the next election, if Parliament be dissolved by a Tory minister, will make itself a Date in History,—recording one of those ominous conjunctions in “the Old Almanack” by which we calculate the chronology of the human progress.

And, my Lord, that the conduct and the victory of our countrymen, will be, as they have been, the one firm and temperate, the other honorable and assured, I do, from my soul, believe. Two years may abundantly suffice to wreck a Government, or convert a King—but scarcely to change a People !

I have the honour to be,

My Lord,

With respect and consideration,

Your Lordship’s obedient servant,

E. LYTTON BULWER.

London, Nov. 21, 1834.

TORY CLAIMS ON POPULAR CONFIDENCE.

“Enough’s as good as a feast.”—*Proverb.*

As some of the journals are inclined to suppose that his Grace the Duke of Wellington and the only party he commands will be disposed to grant reforms and can grant them with honour; as they have even specified the particular reforms of the Irish Church, the Corporation question, and even the admission of Dissenters to the University, it may be as well to ascertain, by the Duke’s own speeches and those of his friends, the grounds of their hypothesis. The people shall at least know how large is the demand upon their confidence.

Dissenters, their claim to enter the University, and their character generally.

“Who, and what were the Dissenters? Many of them differed but little, except in one or two points, from the Established Church; others of them did not agree with the Church of England in any respect; others denied the Trinity, and others were Atheists. Would it be desirable to place such persons in a situation to inflict injury on the Established Church?”—*Speech of the Duke of Wellington, April 20.*

Again, *on the Dissenters' University Bill*—

“ If ever that measure should be adopted by the House, which God forbid ” — *Ibid.*

Irish Church Reliefs.

“ The object of the government, (for Ireland) after the passing of the Roman Catholic Relief Bill, should have been to do all in their power to conciliate—whom? The Protestants! Every thing *had been granted to the Roman Catholics that they could require!* ” — *The Duke of Wellington's Speech, Hansard, p. 950, vol. xix. 3rd Series.*

On the Irish Church Temporalities Bill.

“ Utterly inconsistent with the policy of the country.”

Irish Tithe Bill.

“ If the Government were so feeble, and so irresolute, as to allow the law to be dormant, (in collecting tithes,) then it was no wonder the English Church should be sacrificed.—*Ibid. Aug. 11.*

“ Well,” says one Journal, “ but at least he will give us a Corporation Reform.”—The following sentence looks like it, certainly.

Corporation Reform.

“ He would make one observation, it was desirable emphatically to utter. He doubted, much doubted whether it would be expedient *to establish a new muni-*

principal constitution on the ten-pound franchise. He considered such to be impracticable."

"At least, then," cry the Agriculturists, "We shall be sure of the Malt-tax."—Stay a moment, Sir Robert Peel is to be consulted there.

Malt Tax.

"With respect to the total repeal of the Malt-Tax, he still adhered to the opinion he had stated in the last session—the House could not consent to such an excessive reduction of taxation, as would be implied in the repeal of the Malt-Tax."—*Feb. 27.*

Yet still sighs some love-sick waverer, "Public opinion is strong—there's the Pension List." Ay, Sir Robert Peel gives us great hopes there.

Pension List.

"You are now going to dry up the sources of that power of bestowing rewards for service, which was once considered essential to the well-being of the State. *I challenge you to produce the instances in which there has been a corrupt appropriation of the Pension Fund.* I admit that pensions have been granted as acts of royal favour, without *reference*, (mark what follows,) to public service."—*Peel, May 5.*

So the Pension List is not only to be unexamined, but

it is an admirable thing!—it is essential to the well-being of the State, that acts of royal favour should not have reference to public services.” Well, the Whigs never went so far as that!

But, then, some who deal in comprehensive phrases, despising the drudgery of quoting *particular* acts in which the Tories intend to be liberal, say they intend to be liberal *generally*. Of their general liberality we can guess only from their general politics. But how far they love liberty and hate tyranny, we can see quite as well abroad as at home.

INSTANCES OF GENERAL LIBERALITY.

Negro Slavery.

“He had opposed the measure regarding the West India question from its commencement.”—*The Duke of Wellington.*

Melancholy regrets for not loving Don Miguel.

“This state of things would not continue, if we were in amity with Don Miguel.”

Sympathetic sigh from Lord Aberdeen in assertion of

Don Miguel's popularity.

“Nine-tenths of the people of Portugal were favourable to Don Miguel.”

Belgian Revolution.

“The king has conducted himself above all praise, and if it please, I trust his merits will meet with due success. In truth, the cause of Holland is so *just a cause*, so *good a cause*, that it must prosper; and when I say the cause of Holland, I entreat *your lordships to believe* that I mean *the cause of England also*, for *I consider them inseparable and identical.*”—*Lord Aberdeen. Hansard, vol. ix. 3rd Series.*

Agreeable intelligence from one of our next Cabinet—that the cause of the despotism of the king of Holland is inseparable and identical with the cause of England!

I pass over the calumnies lavished by themselves and their organs, on the three days of France—their resentment at the French People for not submitting to the suspension of the Press, the loss of a constitution, and the bayonets of the soldiers—their admiration for the designs of Charles X.—their compassion for his fall. (Again you will recollect, that if the French have not reaped the due fruits of that Revolution, their fault was a *misplaced confidence in false professions*, and too *sanguine a belief in the unalterable power of public opinion.*) I pass over their immemorial declarations on every part of the Reform Bill—their sneers at our shopkeepers, their scorn for our mechanics, their abhorrence of our £10 voters. In return,

our shopkeepers, our mechanics, and our £10 voters, are requested to invest them with the government ;—upon what grounds, for what principles, from what services, and with what hopes, we have seen already.

By the wish and authority of Lord Brougham, I publish the letter now subjoined to this pamphlet.

The remarks to which it is a reply, are to be found pp. 35—45. As those remarks echoed a sentiment, however erroneously, by no means partially, conceived, it is well, for the sake of the complete vindication of the noble writer himself, that the public should have at once before it—the charge and the reply. For the rest, I know not if I ought to regret expressions which have made me the humble medium of conveying to the People of England so unequivocal a refutation of whatsoever doubts they may have been led to entertain of the sincerity of Lord Brougham's attachment to the cardinal principles of reform.

I waive at once (as who would not?) all comment upon any part of this Letter personal to myself. I do not stop to criticise (as who would,

in a letter written frankly, hastily, and with the obvious desire of uniting reformers, and asserting boldly an unabated devotion to reform ?)—those points in which I yet fancy that I see articles in the creed, or distinctions in the logic, of Political Opinion, with which (I say it with great reverence) I cannot entirely concur. I come at once to the main object—and main interest—of the Letter,—the avowal that Lord Brougham was “*not behind one of his colleagues, in the zealous and active support—in the assiduous preparation—of important reforms ;*” that excepting only the theory of Vote by Ballot, (for the other two questions specified by Lord Brougham, of Universal Suffrage and Annual Parliaments, few, very few, are inclined to agitate,) “*there is no case in which Lord Brougham is found to differ from the stoutest and most unsparing reformers.*”

In the same spirit, as that which actuates myself, I call upon the public to look reflectively, and with a larger criticism than that of verbal cavil, upon the bearing of *the whole* Letter ;—and to rejoice with me at the *unmistakeable*

declarations to be found in its most remarkable passages. Who, at such a time, when we seek to reconcile differences, even with the most moderate, even with the *least distinguished*, supporter of our great cause, can suppose, after such a Letter, that we should not welcome to our ranks a man whose declarations are so explicit—whose genius is so eminent;—so formidable as an enemy—so powerful as a friend?

“We are willing,” said that great and liberal statesman, who now fills so large a space in public esteem—one, who by representing with energy the sound part of public opinion, delivers us from those who would represent only its excesses,—“We are willing,” said Lord Durham, “to make concessions to *our friends*.”

Who will not re-echo that sentiment, so generous and so wise? But if Lord Brougham be the friend of reformers, it can only be from the misconceptions which he now refutes, that he has been considered by any of us the opponent of Lord Durham; and, we may hope that not only the several admirers of these distinguished men, but they

themselves, may once more unite on the broad ground of affection for a common cause, and hostility to a common foe. Union is the keystone of our present policy, and when England expects every man to do his duty, it is her greatest men who should set the example. If I have read aright, the following Letter—on most questions that can be agitated *at present*, (and why, in such times, unbury the differences of *the past*?) these eminent statesmen must be agreed; and, if on any they disagree, the disagreement can be reconciled by the maxim of *conceding to a friend*. Should these pages, which have produced the Letter from which I no longer detain the reader, have been thereby made instrumental in producing such a result, it may be a proof that by speaking frankly of the characters of public men, we give them the best opportunity of explaining their common principles, and reconciling their several differences.

LETTER FROM LORD BROUGHAM

TO

EDWARD LYTTON BULWER, ESQ., M.P.

Paris, December 3rd, 1834.

DEAR SIR,

ALTHOUGH I, of course, never have taken the trouble of replying to the misrepresentations circulated respecting me in one or two of the newspapers, as there is no end of controversy with concealed adversaries; yet when a person of respectability like you, with your name, shows that such misrepresentations have gained admittance into his belief, I have no hesitation at all in setting him right by at once addressing him.

You must have, then, been very much misinformed by whomsoever told you, that between my opinions, and those of my colleagues, either at the Edinburgh dinner or elsewhere, there ever has been, for one moment, the slightest difference whatever of opinion in our wishes respecting measures of reform. I will venture to say, that I never uttered one word in my life, in public or in private, which could indicate a doubt, that all abuses ought to be reformed, and all safe and useful measures of improvement undertaken, with as much despatch as the due preparation of their details would permit. If you read the speech I made at Edinburgh, you will find that I expressed just as much difference of opinion with those who are for resisting improvements and useful change, as with those whose impatience will be satisfied with no delay, how necessary soever, to perfect the schemes proposed. Indeed, I distinctly said, that I differed far more widely with the former, than with the latter ; because the one went only faster and farther than myself, but in the same direction ; whereas the other would not go at all, or rather

were for taking the opposite course. That my sentiments were cordially received by the vast majority of the whole of that meeting, no man, who was present, and could see and hear, will express any doubt.

But, in truth, I do not find that these sentiments are opposed by any man of the reform or liberal party, who has well reflected on the difficulty of introducing vast and complicated changes into the institutions of the country. Who, for example, would have approved of my wisdom as a statesman—who would not have complained of my rashness—if I had pressed through the Municipal Reform Bill, before the Commissioners had made their report? That this great measure was one which I had the most, perhaps, of all at heart, I think no one can doubt, who recollects, not only the responsibility which rested on me, almost singly, in issuing the Commission, against the known wishes of one House of Parliament; but that I was the author of the great measures which were introduced into the House of Lords, in 1833, for giving popular constitutions to the new boroughs, and thus investing with muni-

cipal functions many hundreds of thousands of persons ;---a measure, only not pressed through last session, as is well known, because the Bill for new-modelling the old constitutions of the existing boroughs could not then be ready ; depending, as it did, on the report of the Commissioners.

When you would represent me as a partial or doubtful reformer, you surely have been listening to one or two of the hostile newspapers, and not reflecting on what you must immediately call to mind.

I think no one need fear being considered a timid reformer who carried through (without any other person ever taking any part whatever in its defence) the Scotch Borough Reform Bill—the first attempt at Municipal Reform ever yet made in England—and which was the necessary basis of the great measure of Corporation Reform in preparation by the late Government. I should be only fatiguing you were I to name the other measures of large and uncompromising reform with which my name is connected, *and I will ask any one to point out any one*

instance in the whole course of my public life in which I have opposed, in any manner of way, any practical measure of reform—be it in Church or in State—in the judicial, or in the financial, or in the political department;—I might almost say any measure at all, for—except that I was against Annual Parliaments, Universal Suffrage, and Voting by Ballot—I really recollect no case in which I and even the stoutest and most unsparing reformers ever have been found to differ. My whole life has been devoted to introducing changes of a useful and practical nature, and never at all of a timid or paltry extent, into our establishments and our laws; and when I rely on the good sense and justice of my countrymen, and on their capacity to judge for themselves, and not allow their confidence in me, bestowed upon a uniform experience of above a quarter of a century, to be shaken by a few paragraphs in newspapers—the motives of which all the world plainly sees—I know that I do not indulge a vain hope that I shall continue to enjoy what has always been to me the chief reward of my exertions, next to the approval of my own mind.

That my efforts have been always very much less than I could have desired, and that they have often been unsuccessful, I am most ready to grant; but even where I have not been able to do all I would, I have done what I could to prepare a triumph in better times for the principles which have uniformly, and without one single exception, guided my public life. The last occasion on which I took this course, none other being open to me, *were the efforts which I lately made to abolish the taxes on newspapers* (so hateful to those who would at once instruct the people and purify the press—but so dear to all who profit, or fancy they profit, by them,) *and to amend the Law of Libel*; and I remind you of this matter that you may be able the better to account for the attacks to which in certain quarters I have been exposed, and also to show you that my attempts at reform were not confined to what was done in Parliament.

Your pamphlet alludes to my speeches in Scotland. One of the most eminent judges of that country reminds me, in a letter which I

have just received from him, of the origin of that tour, he having been present early in the spring, when I planned it in concert with him, to show the north of Scotland to one of my children. They who best know me, and that learned Lord among the rest, are, I do assure you, the most astonished, and, indeed, amused at the idea of a succession of speeches and public meetings being a thing at all to my taste ; and they know that I did all I possibly could to avoid those occasions. But I own that this was from personal taste, and not from any sense of public duty ; for I am, and always have been, of opinion, that it is a duty incumbent on statesmen to cultivate a friendly intercourse with the people, and to appear occasionally in their assemblies for the purpose of mutual explanation and counsels. This duty I have not shrunk from ; but personally—(I appeal to all who know me personally)—it is not to me the most agreeable of duties. Else, indeed, why had I continually refused to attend all meetings from the moment I took the great seal ? That refusal is not very consistent with the desire so ridiculously ascribed to me, of speaking at meetings.

That you should allow yourself to call my conduct "unintelligible," and a "riddle," and so forth, is really astonishing, and shows that a person may be condemned, not for any thing he has done, or left undone, but because another finds it easier to write a sentence than to reflect calmly on the facts, and the well-known, and universally known facts, of the case he undertakes to judge. I should think that nothing can be more perfectly consistent than to be a steady reformer of all abuses, and a warm, zealous, and unflinching friend to all improvements in our institutions; and yet, to complain of those whom no amount of change will satisfy, and who cry out that nothing at all is done, if, from the absolute, even physical impossibility of doing every thing at once, any one thing remains undone. I should also hold it a perfectly consistent thing to contend that great measures of reform are necessary, and to bring forward those measures when duly matured, and yet to be averse to bringing them forward in a crude and unsafe shape. Now, I would ask you just calmly to read any speech I ever made in or out

of Parliament, in which I went one hair's breadth further against speedy reform than this ;—I uniformly have said, I will reform as I have reformed ; nay, I am now occupied in preparing reforms ; but I will not change for the sake of change, and I will not bring all reform into discredit by propounding crude measures. This, you are pleased to call being as conservative as the court party can desire ! No man who knows any thing of our history for the last four years, dares reproach me with being a lukewarm reformer, or very infirm of purpose in the government, or very sparing in the measures with which I deal out political improvement. I say nothing now of Law Reform. All have allowed that there I have done enough for the time I had the power ; and all know, though I dare say when it suits them they can forget it, that others prevented me introducing a far more sweeping reform than any yet attempted in our judicial system—I mean the Local Courts. All have, likewise, seen that even when I quitted office, I was so anxious to have the finishing hand put to my Chancery Reform, that I offered

to work for nothing, instead of leading a life of absolute idleness ; and this sacrifice I was ready to make, (a great one, all who know my private pursuits are aware it would have proved,) not only for the sake of saving the public above £ 12,000 a year, but (what is far more important) *to enable the suitors in Chancery to avoid all the evil of a double appeal.* That I have been rewarded for such an offer, as I believe has not often been made to the country, by nothing but abuse*—is only a

* I do the fullest justice to Lord Brougham's motives in the application to Lord Lyndhurst, but I still (with great submission) agree with those of his friends who questioned the discretion of the proceeding. One word, however, in answer to those who have asked, "Why Lord Brougham had not abolished the office of Vice-Chancellor, during the four years he sate on the Woolsack?" The reply is easy. Sir John Leach was not compellable to hear motions ; and, therefore, until a successor to him was appointed, the Rolls Court could not be made effective for the dispatch of all Chancery business. The present Master of the Rolls being obliged, by a late Act of Parliament, to hear motions, and there being now no arrear of causes in the Lord Chancellor's Court, all the business in Chancery may at present be disposed of by the Lord Chancellor, the Master of the Rolls, and the Chief Baron sitting on the Equity side of the Exchequer. But, so long as Sir John Leach lived, and sat as Master of the Rolls, the office of Vice-Chancellor could *not* have been dispensed with. Besides, we must recollect that even since the (very recent) appointment of Sir C. Pepys, there cer-

proof, that at a moment of excitement, no party-man ever can expect even the semblance of justice.

But though my efforts for Law Reform are not denied, (at least as far as I know, for far be it from me to doubt that I may likewise be represented as hostile to that,) yet you and others, who do not sufficiently reflect on the facts, and do not at all consider how mischievous such statements are to the common cause, are pleased to question my being friendly to other reforms. Subsequent events may perhaps have taught those who complained of our scanty doings in Reform, that our position was not without its difficulties. *But this I will assert, that had we met the Parliament, in office, no man would have said the vacation had been passed without abundant attempts to prepare measures of public usefulness—IN A WORD, IMPORTANT REFORMS—and I will add, that if any man shall suppose I was behind ANY ONE of my colleagues in* tainly has been no opportunity of removing Sir Launcelot Shadwell, even supposing that gentleman willing to have exchanged his present office for another.—E. L. B.

the zealous and active support, and in the assiduous preparation of them—that man, be he who he may, will fall into the greatest mistake ever man committed.

I have seen accounts of my having said in Scotland, that “less would be done next session than the last.” That I could say that, or any thing like that, is utterly impossible, because no one knew better than (and not more than two so well as) myself—all the measures in contemplation, and in active preparation. What I did say—not once, but every time I spoke—and was called upon to answer an address of my fellow-countrymen;—what I did say was this—I complained of the charge against us that since the Reform Bill we had done nothing; and then I asked, if all that was done in the two sessions of the Reform Parliament was nothing? I instanced, all those great measures which *had* been passed, from the Negro Emancipation to the Poor Law Amendment; and then I said, that it would be far more correct to say too much had been done than too little; and I may have added, (though I

believe I did not,) that less would be done next year ; and no doubt that is true. Can any one suppose that such prodigious changes as those of 1833 and 1834 can be made again ? But is there any fairness—is there any thing like fairness—in therefore describing me as having said that too much had been done : is that any thing short of a very gross misrepresentation ? let me add, one of the most absurd, as well as gross perversions, that any controversy ever gave rise to ; for if I was complaining (as these thoughtless folks would have it) of so much having been done, of whom, I pray you, must I have been complaining ? Why, of my own self, for assuredly the supposed “ *too much,*” *was done by me as much, if not more, than by any of my colleagues, from the accidental circumstance of my position,* and because, in reality, with the exception of certain points in the Reform Bill, as I stated in Parliament, there never was one single measure proposed in Parliament, while I was in office, which had not my zealous approval, my cordial support, and

my best assistance, in preparing it beforehand, as well as in carrying it through publicly.

The same assertion which I now make as to all former reforms, I repeat most positively as to all those new measures which were in preparation, *and in every one of which I took the warmest interest, and bore a most active part.*

Now, while I trust that you will see nothing but respect for you, personally, in this letter, I must add, without any departure from the same feelings, that if you still consider me inconsistent, because I am a staunch and unflinching Reformer, and yet would have none but wholesome and well-devised reforms propounded, because I was ready with great improvements both in my own and in other departments of the state,—though happily such vast changes as Negro Emancipation and the Poor Law Amendment remained no longer to be made,—because, being no republican, but a friend to limited monarchy, I am against abolishing the House of Lords, greatly as I may lament its errors and prejudices, and even think that, with all its

imperfections, its labours have frequently improved the measures sent from the Commons—who, with all their great and good qualities, are not exempt from error, when they have more work to do than men can finish satisfactorily;—if, for holding these opinions, you, and those with whom you act, and whose honesty and ability I sincerely respect, even where I may not quite agree with you, are pleased still to deny me the small credit of holding a rational, intelligible, and consistent political faith,—all I can say is, that I shall be sorry still to lie under your censure, but that before I can escape from the weight of it, my reason must be convinced—for until then, I must hold fast by the same faith.

In conclusion, let me ask what right any one has to suspect my motives, when I happen to differ with him? My life, excepting four years, was a continued sacrifice of interest to my principles as a Reformer and friend of liberty; and even in taking office four years ago, I made a sacrifice both of feeling and of interests which some alive, and some, alas! no more, well know the

cost of. *But all the time I was in opposition, did I ever show the least slackness to do my duty in the cause of free opinion, and of opposition to the court? What abuse did I ever spare? What bad measure did I ever leave alone? What minister did I ever suffer to rest while the country was to be served by opposing him? With whom did I ever compromise, or treat, or do otherwise than absolutely refuse all parley?* SURELY, EVEN WHERE REFORMERS DIFFER, THESE ARE FACTS WHICH, AS THEY GIVE THE BEST PLEDGE OF SINCERITY ON THE ONE PART, OUGHT TO RECEIVE THE MOST FAVOURABLE CONSTRUCTION AS TO MOTIVE FROM THE OTHER.

Yours truly,

BROUGHAM.

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